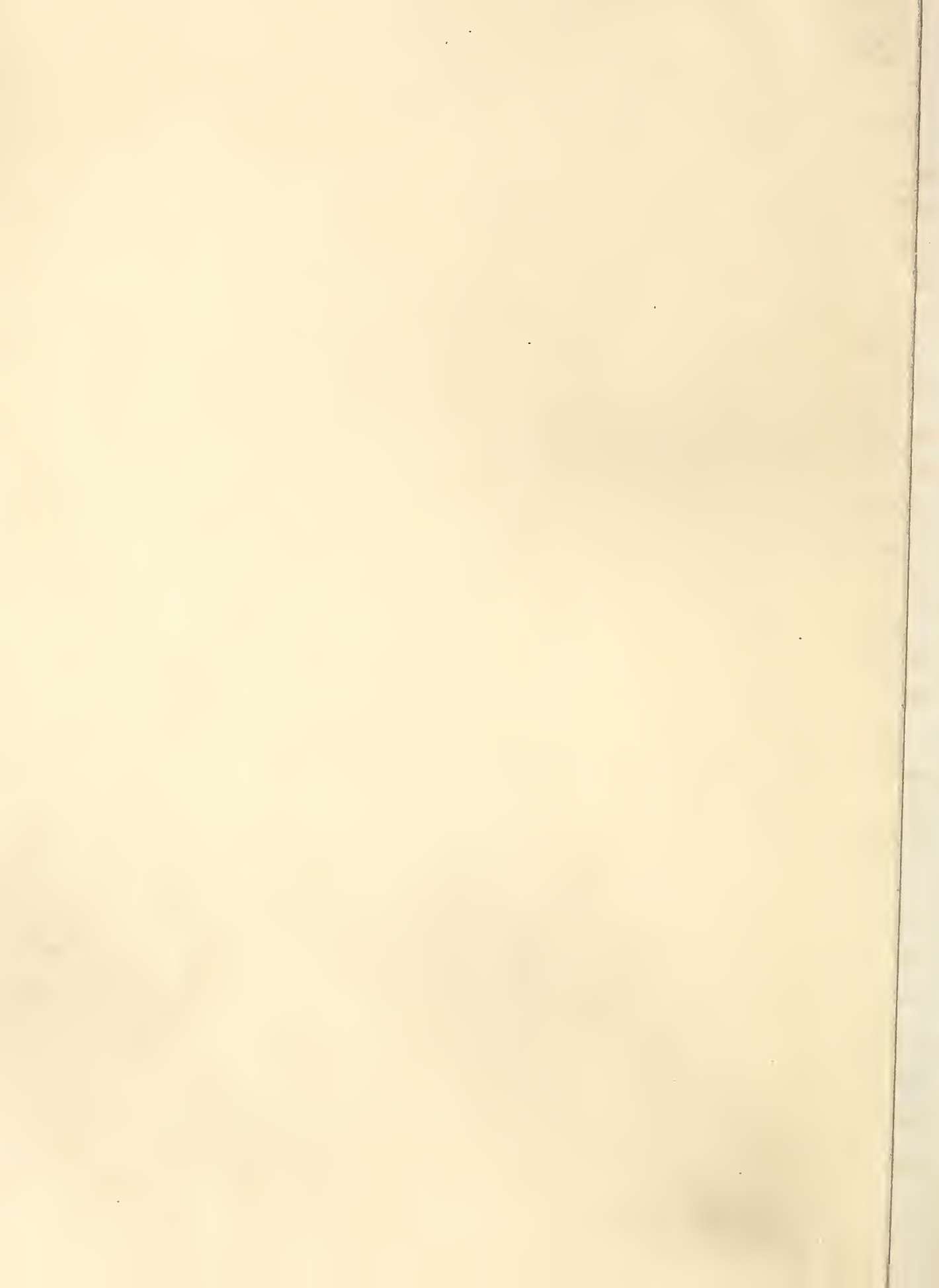


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homemakers' chat

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U S DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Friday, November 14, 1941

SUBJECT: "DINNER-PAIL MEALS." Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Well, Old Man Winter is back with us again--and here to stay for a good while--in most parts of the country anyway. So today I have some notes that are especially timely right about now, it seems to me. I have some information from the U. S. Department of Agriculture on dinner pail meals.

These dinner pail meals are the kind that will give a hard working man just what he needs when he knocks off work for the noon hour. He always needs good hearty food, of course. But in cold weather those noon meals need to be even heartier than usual.

But here's what Doctor Louise Stanley, chief of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Home Economics, has to say about dinner pail meals. She says:

Good food and plenty of it is a basis for the strong bodies, the unfailing energy, and the steady nerves that working men and women need today as never before. One of the most important meals of a workingman's day is his lunch, but, all too often this is also one of his most neglected meals. It need not be, however.

How can you make sure that a carried lunch is complete and satisfying? The first thing you'll want to think about, is how the lunch fits in with the other meals of the day. That is, you'll want to plan the lunch in relation to the man's breakfast and his evening meal. That way you can make sure he is getting all the foods he needs for the whole day.

And here is a list of the foods every workingman and every grownup will want to include in his meals every day--at least this much, I should say.

Every normal grownup needs 2 to 3 cups of milk a day. He needs at least 1 serving of some food rich in vitamin C. He needs at least one other serving of a leafy, green, or a yellow vegetable. Besides those two, he'll need 2 other servings at least of other vegetables and fruits.

Next, it's a good idea for him to get 1 egg a day. But if you can't quite manage that, try to get 3 or 4 a week into his meals. Then every day, he should have at least 1 serving of lean meat, poultry or fish, and 2 servings of whole-grain products or "enriched" bread. And naturally, he'll want some fats and some sweets.

As I've said, those are the foods that every normal grownup needs every day. Here are some special things to remember about the food of a workingman.

More than others, a man who does hard physical work needs a generous supply of energy foods--that is, the foods that supply a lot of calories. He'll probably get these calories by eating larger portions of all foods served to him. But both for economy and for better nutrition, he'll do well to emphasize the high-calorie foods that also carry minerals and vitamins.

Some of the high-calorie foods that carry minerals and vitamins are the whole-grain cereals and the "enriched" breads. Also, they are the starchy vegetables and the dried legumes, such as dry beans, peas, and soybeans. They are the foods high in fat, such as peanuts, peanut butter, and fat meats. And they are the sugars that come in the form of fresh or dried fruits or natural sirups.

Now for the actual make-up of the lunch.

Sandwiches are the basis of most carried lunches, so work up a variety of changes in sandwiches.

Meat sandwiches are great favorites with men. You can use any kind of roast meat, including sliced pot roast. You can use liver chopped up and mixed with crisp bacon. You can use corned beef--and all kinds of canned or cooked

fish--or a tasty meat loaf made at home.

You can make "filling" sandwiches of other high-protein foods besides meat -- cheese, for example, and beans, egg, and peanut butter. I haven't time to mention all the possibilities for filling sandwiches, but I'm sure you know a lot of ways to vary sandwich fillings made of any of these.

For crispness and added food value, you might want to make one of the sandwiches with a fresh vegetable filling. Chopped cabbage or grated carrot creamed in table fat are good. So are grated carrots with raisins or salted peanuts. Or a slice of tomato, several cucumber slices, or chopped or shredded greens in a meat sandwich.

Dried fruit, chopped into well-creamed table fat, makes another nutritious and more unusual sandwich filling.

All bread in sandwiches should be the whole-grain or "enriched" kinds, of course. But you can get a lot of variety by using different kinds of these breads. If you bake at home, you may want to have oatmeal bread, bread with added eggs, dried fruits, nuts once in a while.

Getting away from sandwiches, here are some other good foods to send along in the lunch box. Raw vegetables, such as carrot strips, cucumber sticks, turnips in sticks, raw cabbages in wedge shaped pieces are easy to eat. So is raw fruit in season.

If there is a thermos bottle in the lunch box, here are some of the liquids that could go into that: milk, soup, coffee, cocoa, hot or cold tomato juice, a mixture of half coffee and half milk. Nutrition experts highly recommend the pint of milk for lunch, for its calcium and important vitamins.

There are a lot of other things that you can do, too, to make a carried lunch more nutritious and appetizing.

And just as a final reminder, here are five of the cardinal rules for lunch box preparation as Dr. Stanley gives them.

1. Wrap up foods neatly.
2. Strive for variety in every lunch--and from day to day.
3. Rule out foods that are too moist and foods with unnecessary frills.
4. Season things so they'll be interesting--especially remember to use plenty of salt.
- 5.-- is a word of warning--Be especially careful meat and egg mixtures are fresh and wholesome. Be doubly careful if the lunch box can't be kept in a fairly cool place all morning.

And that's the news about what to put in the dinner pail.

